

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheets makes changes to Figs. 4 and 5 and replaces the original sheets with Figs. 1-7.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 8-10, 12 and 13 are amended. Further, the drawing Figs. 1-7 are replaced by the attached Replacement Drawing Sheets. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. Drawings

Original drawing Figs. 1-7 are replaced with the attached Replacement Drawing Sheets of the formal drawings.

In Fig. 4, a paper stop at 28 is in an open state. Therefore, a planet gear 54 and a gear 56 are disengaged and apart from one another (page 17, lines 1-13 of the specification). Fig. 4 is corrected to show the planet gear 54 and the gear 56 in a disengaged state as supported by the specification.

In Fig. 5, reference numeral "56" is replaced with reference numeral --102-- to correct an informality. Fig. 5 is also corrected to show a lower part of a power transmission belt 105 being wound on a pulley 104 (Fig. 6 and page 23, lines 9-11 of the specification).

II. Claim Objection

The Office Action objects to claim 12 because of an informality. Claim 12 is amended to obviate the objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement because the claims contain subject matter that was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

In the July 21, 2005 Request for Reconsideration (Request), Applicant provided a detailed explanation showing ample support for the terms "operation lever" and "linking mechanism" in the specification and the figures. For at least these reasons discussed in the Request, Applicant submits that the specification and the figures provide ample support for the terms "operation lever" and "linking mechanism," as well as other claimed features, in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential structural cooperative elements. Specifically, the Office Action asserts that the omitted structural cooperative relationships in claims 1, 8 and 9 are as follows: (1) the operation lever and the power transmission mechanism; (2) the operation lever and the link mechanism; and (3) the support, the driving unit and the link mechanism. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Independent claims 1, 8 and 9 are amended to better clarify the structural cooperative relationship between the support unit, the power transmission mechanism, the driving unit, the link mechanism and the operation lever.

The Office Action also asserts that the recitation in claims 2 and 10 of "one end edges of the sheets of paper" is unclear. Claims 2 and 10 are amended to recite that an operation lever abuts "an end edge of each of the sheets of paper." Because claims 2 and 10 are only amended to better clarify the language of the claims, the claims are not narrowed by such amendments.

Further, the Office Action asserts that the recitation in claims 9, 12 and 13 of "supplied from the external" is unclear. Claims 9, 12 and 13 are amended to recite that a

driving force may be "supplied from an external driving unit." Because claims 9, 12 and 13 are only amended to make explicit in the language of the claims what was implicit, the claims are not narrowed by such amendments.

For at least the reasons discussed above, claims 1-16 include essential structural cooperative elements and better clarify the language of the claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

V. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 5-9 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 3,563,535 to Vitu et al. (Vitu). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Vitu does not disclose a paper feed device in which "the link mechanism disconnects the power transmission mechanism from the support unit to cut off the transmission of the driving force to the support unit" as recited in independent claims 1, 8 and 9.

Vitu discloses, in Figs. 1-5 and 9, a photocopying machine 11 including a plate 73 holding a stack 21, a lifting member 75 having a finger bracket 81 with fingers 87, 89 (support unit), a torsion spring 93, a rod 83 (power transmission mechanism), a linkage 105 and a camming plate 103, and a door 19. Vitu also discloses that the camming plate 103 includes an opening partially defined by a diagonal camming surface 113 and a horizontal surface 115 (Fig. 3, and col. 4, lines 43-56).

When closing the door 19, Vitu discloses that the force of the torsion spring 93 urges the rod 83 upward along the diagonal camming surface 113 of the camming plate 103 away from the horizontal surface 115 so that the lifting mechanism 75 is resiliently biased upward to lift the plate 73 that holds the stack 21 (Figs. 2, 3 and 9, col. 3, lines 61-64, and col. 6, line 58 - col. 7, line 11). When opening the door 19, Vitu discloses that the rod 83 is forced downward along the diagonal camming surface 113 of the camming plate 103 beneath the horizontal surface 115 so that the lifting mechanism 75 is held in a lower position out of

contact with the plate 73 that holds the stack 21 (Figs. 3-5 and 9, and col. 4, lines 56-60 and 66-71). Therefore, the force of the torsion spring 93 is not transmitted to lift the plate 73.

As discussed above, Vitu discloses that the fingers 87, 89 of the lifting mechanism 75 engage/disengage the plate 73 (Figs. 2 and 4) depending on the closed/opened state of the door 19. However, the rod 83 is in constant engagement with the lifting mechanism 75 and the camming plate 103 regardless of the closed/opened state of the door 19. Because the rod 83 is in constant engagement with the lifting mechanism 75, the camming plate 103 does not cut off transmission of a driving force from the torsion spring 93 by disconnecting a portion of lifting mechanism 75 from the rod 83.

In other words, the rod 83 (power transmission mechanism), the finger bracket 81 and the fingers 87, 89 (support unit) are always connected to each other. Because Vitu does not teach or suggest that the rod 83 (power transmission mechanism) disconnects from the fingers 87, 89 (support unit), Vitu does not teach or suggest a link mechanism that disconnects the power transmission from the support unit to cut off transmission of a driving force to a support unit, as set forth in claims 1, 8 and 9.

For at least these reasons, claims 1, 8 and 9 are patentable over Vitu. Claims 4-7 and 14-16 variously depend from claims 1 and 9, and thus are also patentable over Vitu, for at least the reasons set forth above, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-16 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Holly N. Moore
Registration No. 50,212

JAO:HNM/lbg

Attachment:
Replacement Drawing Sheets (Figs. 1-7)

Date: February 2, 2006

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--